COMMANDERS DIGEST

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New Military Medicare Bill Approaches Final Hurdle

DOD's medicare package bringing more liberal health benefits for retired military personnel and dependents is expected to go into effect around July 1.

At last report a special subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee was hearing testimony on the House bill.

DOD submitted three interrelated legislative proposals to Congress in March. The House Armed Services Committee combined the proposals, with some modifications, into one bill.

Testimony by Assistant Defense Secretary (Manpower) Thomas D. Morris revealed that DOD goes along with certain House modifications, but asked that other provisions be restored to the original level.

Among provisions of the bill is inpatient and outpatient care for retired military personnel, their dependents and dependents of active service personnel. This includes care from civilian physicians and admittance to civilian hospitals on a cost sharing basis.

The bill also includes provisions for handicapped dependents of active service personnel and provides some beds and outpatient facilities for retirees in new medical construction projects.

McNamara Asserts NATO Strength Is Necessary And Must Maintain

Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara said NATO must remain strong and its strength must be maintained.

The Secretary stated categorically that the United States is capable of maintaining its combat capability in Europe while continuing to meet planned troop deployments to Southeast Asia.

Concerning NATO's nuclear weapons defense, Secretary McNamara said there are no plans to give nuclear weapons control to the Federal Republic of Germany.

Army General Selection Board to Meet

Selection board meets on or about June 27 recommending appointments to temporary major general and permanent brigadier general, Army Promotion List.

LIMITED SPACE—Lt. Colonel Edward Davis, Chief, A-1 System Support Management Division, McClellan AFB, Calif., gets briefing on new "extraction" system being installed in A-1E aircraft. Warren Mendenhall, A-1 Technical Services Chief explains how AF pilots can be extracted from small cockpit clearance in standing position at virtually any speed or altitude. A-1E is used in RVN ground support actions.

Extra Leave Proposal For SVN Extensions

A non-chargeable 30-day leave at the expense of the government has been proposed for members of the U.S. Armed Forces in Vietnam who extend for an additional six-months beyond the normal one-year tour.

A draft of legislation to amend the present law has been sent to Congress by the Defense Department.

The proposal requests a bill "to authorize a special 30-day period of leave for a member of a uniformed service who voluntarily extends his tour of duty in a hostile fire area."

The leave would be exclusive of travel time and at an authorized place selected by the individual.

The bill also notes that transportation will be provided to and from the place of departure.

Washington Memos

UNDER PRESENT LAW military leave granted is chargeable to the individual's leave account, including all travel time.

THE THIRTY-DAY leave proposal for individuals in hostile fire areas would be non-chargeable and would be exclusive of travel time if the individual extends his required tour by at least six-months. The proposed legislation would also pertain to individuals presently in Vietnam.

AIR FORCE Communications Service observes fifth anniversary July 1. Under command of Maj. Gen. Richard P. Klocko, service at Scott AFB, Ill., operates and maintains on-base and global communications, air traffic control services and air navigational aids for AF and other government and civilan agencies.

COMPANY OF ARMY civil affairs specialists, first unit of its type serving in RVN, arrived Da Nang to assist Marines in pacification and rebuilding efforts. Company, composed of 30 officers and 88 enlisted men, and trained four months at Army's Civil Affairs School, Ft. Gordon, Ga.

RED BIRD PLAZA, Office and Research Center, has been selected for new Army and Air Force Exchange Service headquarters. Selection climaxed detailed study of six locations in Dallas-Fort Worth area. Site is nine miles from downtown Dallas and 14 miles from Love Field Airport.

PELLET GUNS AS standard equipment are scheduled for most AFBs to supplement small arms marksmanship training programs and save on ammunition and weapons cost. Pellet guns also provide firing for facilities at remote locations and during inclement weather.

EUROPEAN EXCHANGE SYSTEM shopping centers now offer gasoline coupons for travel to Spain. EES installations at Wiesbaden and Ramstein Germany, Chateauroux and Evreux France, sell coupons after purchaser produces leave or temporary duty orders and vehicle registration certificate.

SIMULATED HUMAN TISSUE was sent into orbit, testing biological hazards to man in space. This part of Air Force's continuing studies tells scientists how much radiation damage an astronaut's body would undergo in similar manned flight.

MONTHLY BULLETIN ENTITLED "The Gulf Stream," instituted for release by U.S. Naval Oceanographic Office, Suitland, Md. New technical summary presents Gulf Stream positions at start and end of each month as well as indicating what would be normal for that period. Associated mean sea surface temperature patterns, and variations from normal for western North Atlantic are also shown.

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE AT Army Corps of Engineers water resource projects totalled a record-breaking 168.6 million visits in CY65. This is 12.1 million increase over 1964 attendance of 156.5 million, previous all-time high.

NINTH CLASS OF German AF officers was graduated from Lockheed Super Starfighter pilot training course, Luke AFB, Ariz. GAF pilots return to West Germany for duties with GAF's NATO contingent. Luke course includes formation flying, air combat tactics, night navigation, and practice firing on the DART tow target.

CAPT. ROLAND A. BOSEE, USN, Medical Service Corps, has been awarded the Harry G. Moseley Award for "significant contribution in the field of flight safety." Presented by Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, the award was established in memory of the late Col. Moseley, USAF.

LT. COL. DONALD H. FOSS has assumed command of Marine Helicopter Squadron One, Marine Corps Air Station, Quantico, Va. He also assumes duties of Presidential Helicopter Pilot. Lt. Col. Foss holds Navy Commendation Medal for helicopter rescue of former Presidential Press Secretary James Hagerty and other White House personnel from an angry mob in Japan.

GROUND TESTING OF Army's Lance missile system is underway at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., where missile will be subjected to series of static firing and "torture tests" directed toward final design. Lance will have substantially greater range and accuracy than Honest John missile which it will replace. Lance missile can be armed with either nuclear or conventional warheads.

RANDOLPH AFB VEHICLE Maintenance Section came up with saving of $1,000 in AF Cost Reduction Program with new method of brake testing. Under previous system of preventive maintenance each vehicle had periodic inspection every 90 days or 6,000 miles. Now, vehicles are given annual safety inspection including visual check of brake shoes.

NAVY REPORTS ITS new MK46 Torpedo is now operational with air units of antisubmarine warfare force. New torpedo may be launched from fixed wing aircraft, helicopters and surface ships. Surface ships will have capability of launching MK46 by ASROC missile system for long range attacks, or over the side from torpedo tubes. Navy officials expect sizeable quantity of MK46s will be in fleet by end of this year, with greatly expanded production scheduled for subsequent years.

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Background for Commanders

NATO Remains Determined

The 37th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the North Atlantic Alliance was one of the most important since the early days of NATO. For it had to deal with the consequences of the decision of France to withdraw from the integrated defense system built with so much care, and to require NATO and American military installations and personnel to leave France.

The other 14 members of the Alliance had declared on March 18 their unanimous determination to preserve and improve NATO's integrated military organization. At Brussels, meeting first as 14 and then with France, they unanimously reaffirmed that determination and took the first steps in making the necessary readjustments. They agreed to transfer the various NATO military headquarters from France and to simplify in certain respects the command structure. They extended an invitation to the Benelux countries to provide a new home for SHAPE. While France said it would be glad to have the Council itself remain in Paris, the 14 felt that keeping it there would pose some practical problems, and they agreed that it is important to have the political headquarters and the military headquarters not too far apart geographically. They deferred until October a decision on moving the Council.

Questions To Be Settled

All the NATO members, including France, agreed that the questions they must settle as a result of the French decisions, beyond those acted upon at Brussels, will be discussed first in the NATO Council, which may assign some questions to smaller groups. Problems that cannot be resolved through those channels will be taken up at the Ministerial level. And when the essential political decisions have been reached, the purely military arrangements will be taken up between the French High Command and the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe.

The deliberations at Brussels clearly showed that NATO continues to have vitality and that the other 14 consider that the decision of France must not interfere with their own unity in the measures needed to protect the safety and well-being of the North Atlantic community. Certainly the problems created by the French decision are complex and costly, and will require continuing effort over a considerable period of time.

The Foreign Ministers agreed not to indulge in recrimination but to continue to regard France as an ally—as France says it is—to try to work out some form of coordination between the NATO military structure and the French military forces, and to hope that in time France will decide to resume a full partnership in NATO's defense system.

All the members of NATO have observed with interest, and hope, signs of evolution in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union—evolution toward national autonomy, less harsh internal discipline, and the restoration of somewhat more normal relations between the peoples of Eastern Europe and those of the West. There was some feeling that the danger of war has receded somewhat and that intensified efforts should be made to improve East-West relations and to solve the grave disputes left over from the Second World War.

If the outlook has improved in these respects, the strength and solidarity of NATO are largely responsible. And a strong NATO remains necessary as a base for further efforts to improve East-West relations.

Facts To Remember

In any discussion of reduced tensions, it must be remembered that 5 years ago this month war was threatened if Allied forces were not withdrawn from Berlin, that 3½ years ago the Soviet Union caused another grave crisis by introducing offensive weapons into Cuba, and that Soviet arms are going to North Vietnam to assist the Communist effort to seize South Vietnam by force.

The facts of the world situation require that NATO remain strong and alert. They require that free nations not repeat the tragic errors of the past—that they not make one-sided reductions in defense that tempt adversaries to resort once again to force or threats . . . that they not impair the security which the members of NATO have achieved for themselves and other free nations by their collective exertions, including the investment of more than one trillion dollars in defense since 1947. The surest way to lose the peace is to destroy or weaken the instruments that are preserving the peace.

NOTES ON NATO

Background for Commanders on May 14 dealt with the crisis generated by the decision of France to withdraw from NATO's integrated defense system and to require NATO and U.S. military installations and personnel to leave France. Today's Backgrounder follows up with a report on the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the North Atlantic Alliance, held in Brussels June 7-8. Just a week after this meeting, Secretary of Defense McNamara announced plans for the first major U.S. military withdrawal from France.

Officer Retainer Bill Moves Through Committee

A bill to help the armed forces retain professional and scientific officers in military careers has received approval from the House Armed Services Committee.

Known as the Constructive Credit Bill, it was introduced by Congressman Alexander Pirnie (R), New York, with amendments offered by Congressman Robert Leggett (D), California. It provides a more equitable method for giving pay and rank credit to men, who as a prerequisite for entering the Service, have specialized education beyond the four-year baccalaureate level.

Committee Chairman L. Mendel Rivers anticipates early passage by the House.

TO TAKE CHARGE—Rear Admiral James A. Alger Jr., becomes Commander, Eastern Area, USCG, June 30, replacing Rear Admiral Irvin J. Stephens, who is retiring. Adm. Alger reports to New York from Boston where he commanded First CG District.

Defense Proposes Law Aiding POV Operators

Service personnel using their privately owned vehicles for official travel would be reimbursed for certain fees, fares, and charges under a current legislative proposal.

Reimbursement would be for parking lot fees, ferry fares, and road, bridge and tunnel toll charges, as proposed by Defense Department. Official travel provisions include permanent changes of station.

If passed, service benefits would be brought in line with those presently afforded civilian employees.

September 28 Designated Armed Forces Voters Day

The Defense Department has set Sept. 28 as Armed Forces Voters Day.

The day is set aside to make certain that all voting age eligible individuals are afforded the means by which they may apply for absentee ballots.

U.S.-French Agreement For Weather Forecasting

Space agencies of the U.S. and France have signed a cooperative agreement to conduct tests of a new method for gathering meteorological data to improve long-range weather forecasting.

The project has been designated Eole (the French word for Aeolus, god of the winds in Greek mythology), according to NASA.

The tests will seek to demonstrate the scientific value and technical feasibility of collecting meteorological data on a global scale by means of constant level balloons and an Earth-orbiting satellite.

Army Scientific Advisors Confer on Activities in SEA

Problems of U. S. fighting men in Vietnam were scheduled to come under review by Army's top scientific advisory body at a Ft. Benning, Ga. conference June 21-22.

Self-Sealer Designed To Plug Spacecraft Holes

A self-sealing, quick-hardening rubber material has been designed to plug holes in space vehicles caused by micrometeorites.

Developed by Air Force Systems Command, the liquid rubber hardens automatically and instantly when a vehicle is struck by one of the fast-moving projectiles. Packets of the material are incorporated into the spacecraft's walls.

Without such an instant repair system, astronauts would have to leave the capsule to find the small holes and patch them.

The product's working principle is similar to self-sealants now used in some automobile tires.

'Log' Fleet Now Tops 350 Boats

The arrival of the Army's 329th Transportation Company and its eight 180-ton landing craft utility (LCU) boats has boosted the 1st Logistical Command's "navy fleet" in RVN to over 350 sea-going vessels.

Commanded by Capt. Joel T. Dalton, the new unit has a primary mission of providing supplies to combat units in the Mekong Delta and assist in cargo discharge operations at Vung Tau.

Personnel Actions

Brig. Gen. Adriel N. Williams, USAF, named Deputy Director of Transportation, USAF. Succeeding Gen. Williams as VC 21st AF McGuire AFB, N.J., Brig. Gen. Howard E. Kreidler, USAF. Capt. G. C. Heffner, CO NSC Long Beach, Calif, relieved by RAdm. H. F. Kuehl, SC, USN. RAdm. George D. Synon, USCG, assumed command 14th CG District, Honolulu.

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